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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/561,548	03/07/2006	Maria Jose Alonso Fernandez	4258-116	9386
23448	7590	06/23/2008		
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY / TECHNOLOGY LAW			EXAMINER	
PO BOX 14329			WINTERBERG, NISSA M	
RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC 27709			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1618	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			06/23/2008	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/561,548

**Applicant(s)**

FERNANDEZ ET AL.

**Examiner**

Nissa M. Westerberg

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**Period for Reply** -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 April 2008.  
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.  
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 - 28 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) 1 - 15, 21, 23 - 28 is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
6) ☒ Claim(s) 16 - 20, 22 is/are rejected.  
7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12/1/06, 12/20/05 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/26/06, 12/20/05  
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_  
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

1. Applicant's election of group II and a cationic polymer of chitosan in the reply filed on April 9, 2008 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Applicant is correct in that group IV of the restriction requirement should consist of claim 28.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

### ***Drawings***

2. The drawings are objected to because the correspondence between the various bars in the bar graph and the various samples being tested in figures 8, 10 and 11 cannot be determined. A figure legend and an indication for the bar pattern for that sample is present. However, the shading appears the same for all three samples in the legend while the shading of the bars in the graph varies within each bar. This is true for replacement figures 10 and 11 as well as original figure 8. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should

include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph***

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. This claim is a product-by-process claim, wherein the process is defined in claim 1. In that claim, the diameter of the particle obtained is "less than  $\mu\text{m}$ ". It is unclear what the maximum diameter of a particle may be.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

7. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 16 – 20 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Prokop (US 2003/0170313) in view of Calias et al. (2003/0087877).

Prokop discloses nanoparticles comprising a polyanionic polymer and polycations in a complex useful for drug delivery (abstract). In table 1 (p 6, a full explanation of the abbreviations can be found in paragraph [0056]), preferred combinations of cationic and anionic polymers are presented. The first example comprises high viscosity sodium alginate (SA-HV), sodium triphosphate (3PP) and chitosan (chit). Sodium triphosphate is also paired with the polyanionic polymers cellulose sulfate (CS), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC) and gellan with a different cationic component, namely polyvinylamine (PVA).

In example 5 (paragraphs [0085] – [0086]), nanoparticles are prepared which comprise egg ovalbumin (OVA), a macromolecule, as the active ingredient. In example 23 (paragraphs [0124] – [0125]), fibroblast growth factor beta, a different macromolecule, is incorporated in the nanoparticle.

Prokop does not disclose the use of salts of hyaluronic acid, such as hyaluronic acid, as suitable anionic components.

Calias et al. discloses that hyaluronic acid and any of its salts, such as sodium hyaluronate, carboxymethyl cellulose and sodium alginate are all polyanionic polysaccharides (paragraph [0018]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the instant to prepare nanoparticles comprising a polyanion polymer, 3PP, a polycationic

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polymer and a macromolecular active ingredient as taught by Prokop and to use sodium hyaluronate as the polyanionic polymer, taught by Calias et al. as a polyanionic polysaccharide equivalent to the sodium alginate and carboxymethyl cellulose used to produce nanoparticles by Prokop.

Claim 16 is a product-by-process claim. "[E]ven though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process." *In re Thorpe*, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985) (citations omitted) **MPEP 2113**.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nissa M. Westerberg whose telephone number is (571)270-3532. The examiner can normally be reached on M - F, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. ET. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Hartley can be reached on (571) 272-0616. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michael G. Hartley/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1618

NMW